

DISCUSSION OF THE AMENDMENT

The claims have been amended, where applicable, to recite that the eggshell membrane is water-soluble, as supported in the specification at the paragraph bridging pages 2 and 3. As described therein, Applicants have used the term “soluble” to mean “water-soluble”. Thus, this amendment does not narrow the scope of the claims.

Claims 2 and 7 have each been amended for clerical purposes only. Claim 8 has been amended by deleting “such as”, and following, language. All multiple dependencies have been changed to single dependencies.

New Claims 10-20 have been added. Claims 10-18 claim subject matter deleted by the above-discussed amendment to Claim 8 and the elimination of multiple dependency. Claims 19 and 20 are supported in the specification at page 3, line 1.

No new matter is believed to have been added by the above amendment. Claims 1-20 are now pending in the application.

REMARKS

The rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) of Claims 1-3 and 5-9 over JP 4-311767 (JP '767), and of Claims 1-9 over JP 63-309273 (JP '273), are respectfully traversed.

The presently-claimed inventions, as embodied, for example, in Claims 1 and 5, require the use of a **water-soluble** eggshell membrane. The applied prior art, on the other hand, and as now discussed, do not disclose or suggest water-soluble eggshell membranes.

JP '767 discloses egg-shell membrane fine particles blended into a polyurethane resin, thereby producing a composition excellent in hydroscopicity and suitable for producing various kinds of goods excellent in whiteness and excellent dyeable. Egg-shell membrane material is not naturally water-soluble, and there is no disclosure or suggestion in JP '767 to treat their fine particles to make them water-soluble.

JP '273 discloses an eggshell membrane sheet, wherein powdery eggshell membrane is dispersed in an aqueous suspension. Clearly, the powdery eggshell membrane of JP '273 is not water-soluble because if it was, it would not have to be **dispersed**. Clearly, there is no disclosure or suggestion in JP '273 to process their powdery eggshell membrane to make it water-soluble.

For all the above reasons, it is respectfully requested that the rejections over prior art be withdrawn.

The objection to Claim 4 is now moot in view of the above-discussed amendment. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that the objection be withdrawn.

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All of the presently-pending claims in this application are now believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to pass this application to issue.

Customer Number

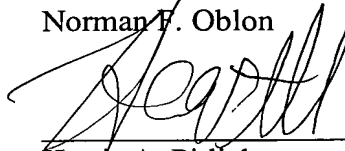
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